

EXHIBIT A



8 May 2023

The Honorable Richard M. Berman
United States District Judge for the
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007-1312

Dear Judge Berman,

I have known former Congressman Steve Buyer since 1976 when we were cadets together at The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina. From February 1993 through December 1998, I served as his military legislative assistant (MLA) in his personal congressional office. From June 2005 through August 2008, I served as his Staff Director and subsequently Minority Staff Director of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

I testified at Mr. Buyer's trial and am aware of his conviction for insider trading in March 2023. I believe this conviction is out of character with the individual I have known and worked with for over forty years. Throughout our time together serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, Mr. Buyer served with integrity and honor and demonstrated a deep commitment not only to his Indiana constituents, but to the members of the U.S. armed forces, military family members and veterans.

Mr. Buyer made numerous contributions in the areas of military personnel policy and veterans affairs over the course of his congressional career. Space does not permit a complete list; however his more significant contributions include:


- TRICARE for Life (T4L) – As a member of the Military Personnel (MILPERS) Subcommittee in the mid-1990's, Mr. Buyer materially contributed to legislation that created TRICARE, the health care program for uniformed service members, retirees, and their families around the world. As originally formulated, military personnel lost their TRICARE benefit when they turned age 65 and went on Medicare. As Chairman of the MILPERS Subcommittee, he worked across the aisle and with the Senate to create the T4L program in the FY 2001 National Defense Authorization Act. The program allows military beneficiaries on Medicare Part A and B to use the T4L program for physician, hospital, surgical, and pharmaceutical services. Mr. Buyer ensured the continued existence of the program by creating a trust fund to pay for T4L.
- As Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC), Mr. Buyer led the passage of The Veterans' Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-461). Following the loss of a VA laptop containing personnel identifying information of approximately twenty-six million veterans, the law established a program to provide security for VA information and information systems and he centralized the IT infrastructure and CIO line authority for the VA Health system that saved the VA hundreds of millions of dollars.

- As Ranking Member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee in the aftermath of the Walter Reed Hospital scandal in 2007, he worked with the majority leadership of both the HVAC and the House Armed Services Committee on legislation ultimately included in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2008 (Public Law 110-181). His provisions made specific improvements to and required a comprehensive plan for the care, management and transition of recovering service members from Iraq and Afghanistan from the Department of Defense to the Department of Veterans' Affairs.
- In 2006, Steve Buyer worked with his appropriations colleagues to insert language into the conference report to accompany the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-114, H.Rept. 109-305). This legislation directed VA to implement a cost-effective purchased care management program and develop at least three pilot programs with industry. The VA decided to enhance an existing fee-based care program called Project HERO (Healthcare Effectiveness through Resource Optimization). From this modest beginning the VA has exponentially expanded its community care program for veterans spending approximately \$21.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2022 alone.

In addition to these detailed examples, Mr. Buyer worked on a myriad of other issues including increased pay and benefits for serving military personnel, creation of the Thrift Savings Program for active-duty service members, partial elimination of the disability payment offset of military retirement pay, the creation of VA Polytrauma Centers to assist combat veterans with traumatic brain injuries and legislation in support of veterans suffering from Gulf War Illnesses. These actions demonstrate Mr. Buyer's deep concern throughout his career for military personnel and veterans from the day they reported to boot camp to the day they are buried in a VA cemetery.

As a Citadel cadet Mr. Buyer lived by the school honor code – A cadet does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do. In my experience, he carried this code forward into his professional life and expected his staff to conduct themselves the same way. His conviction for insider trading is totally out of character for the Steve Buyer I know. I ask that you consider his long, honorable, and selfless tenure in Congress serving America's military personnel and veterans when considering sentencing. As a former Commanding General UCMJ Court Martial Convening Authority, I have used the balance test to exercise justice and I am compelled to say given Mr. Buyer's extraordinary lifetime of selfless service in the military and to the American people, that if you feel compelled to confine Mr. Buyer, I would recommend some form of home confinement and respectfully request that Mr. Buyer be a candidate for supervised release with some form of community service. A lengthy prison sentence would be a tragic end to a career dedicated to serving others.

Thank you for your consideration.
Very Respectfully


James M. Lariviere
MajGen USMC (Ret.)